3. A Committee under the Chairmanship of Deputy Master General of Ordnance was constituted to evaluate the Technical Proposal of the Vendors. The Committee after evaluating the Technical proposal has submitted its report to the Ministry of Defence on 3.7.2002.

Shifting of Air Force Engineering College, Kanpur

767. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Minister of Defence had laid the foundation stone in 1977 for setting up the Air Force Engineering College at Kanpur after taking into consideration its proximity with the Base Repair Depots. Equipment Depot and other maintenance facilities for supporting the training;

(b) if so, whether there is a proposal to shift this College to some other location; and

(c) if so, the reasons for shifting of the location and the delay to accord Government approval for the setting up of this College at Kanpur?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) The foundation stone was laid by the then Minister for Defence in 1997 and not in 1977.

(b) and (c) The case is being reviewed at present. A decision will be taken in the matter after taking into account all the relevant factors, keeping in view the national interest. However, it is not possible to lay down any time limit for this purpose.

Postponement of elections of Cantonment Boards due to proposed amendment in the Act

768. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that elections to the 62 Cantonment Boards of the country have been postponed in order to carry out amendments in the Cantonment Board Act;

(b) if so, the details of the amendments proposed and by when the amending Bill is likely to be introduced in Parliament;

(c) what is the sanctity of withholding elections of Cantonment Boards without amending the relevant law which is quite a lengthy process; and

(d) what steps Government propose to take to hold the elections to the Cantonment Boards which are overdue?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (d) The Central Government has, in pursuance of the proviso to Sub-Section (1) of Section 15 of the Cantonment Act, 1924, have extended the term of office of elected members of 51 Cantonment Boards up to 31st December, 2002 as it is intended to hold the elections for those Cantonment Boards under the new Act which is in the process of being formulated. Elections for 10 Cantonment Boards are not yet due. One Cantonment Board stand varied and its terms has been extended up to February, 2003.

Missile tests conducted by India

†769. SHRI HARENDRA SINGH MALIK: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of missile tests conducted by Government from January, 2002 till date;

(b) the amount spent on each of the said missile tests alongwith its achievements;

(c) by when the said missiles are likely to be inducted in the Indian Navy;

(d) whether Government propose to conduct more missile tests keeping in view Pakistan's missile programme; and

(e) if so, the details of progress made in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Seven development flight trials have been carried out since January, 2002 which includes two flight tests of Naval version of Trishul, one of BrahMos, one of Akash, two of Nag and one of Agni-1.

(b) One laboratory of Defence Research and Development Organisation is dedicated for conducting flight testing of missiles. In addition a large number of scientists and personnel from other laboratories who have developed the missile and support system are involved in the testing. It has not been the practice to apportion the different costs of testing missiles. Most of the mission objectives set for each flight tests were achieved.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.